



GEORGIA'S SOURCE FOR IMPORTANT PHYSICIAN INFORMATION

Medical Professional Liability Insurance Alternatives Costly

Purchasing medical professional liability insurance is one of the most important buying decisions you will make. One claim against you or your practice could affect your livelihood as well as your family's assets and security. Therefore, it is imperative that you choose a medical professional liability insurer that will be there for the long-term and have the funds to defend you and pay a claim should it occur.

However, rising premiums and tighter underwriting restrictions are causing some physicians to look at the alternatives, such as captives and risk retention groups. There's a belief that lower prices can be charged and, over time, these groups can also become an investment vehicle for their owners.

Start-up ventures in an unstable loss climate face great uncertainties. Ask the following questions of your potential insurer before you decide:

- What are your total assets?
- What is your A.M. Best rating?
- Are you eligible for the state insolvency fund that protects MDs?
- Does the state insurance department regulate you?

In addition, with the increase in claims severity in recent years, the fiscal strength of a medical professional liability insurer has become a critically important issue. MAG Mutual is rated A- Excellent by A.M. Best, and our financial stability is testimony to the trust and confidence that

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Risk Management Tips

Prescription Refills

Medication errors are a major risk.

The nurse calling in a prescription refill without physician approval is viewed as practicing medicine without a license.

The public has become very aware of medication errors because of recent media coverage on the Institute of Medicine report.

Every physician should have processes in place to ensure safe practice when it comes to medication prescription refills. The chart should always be pulled prior to calling in a refill, and the phone calls along with the refill information should be documented in the chart. Each office should require the nurse to obtain a written or verbal order from the physician prior to each refill. Each protocol should include the following:

- Which staff member is authorized to call in refills (should be the physician, physician extender per protocol, or a licensed nurse). If it is the nurse, include a list of medications that the nurse is allowed to call in for a refill
- The number of times the prescription can be refilled before the patient must be seen by the physician
- Documentation of the order as "Per Protocol Dr. Doe/nurse's name and professional designation, i.e. RN or LPN." The chart is then given to the physician for review and signature of the order

Allergies should be noted in a prominent way on the front of the chart and on the medication flow sheet. It is recommended that a medication flow sheet,

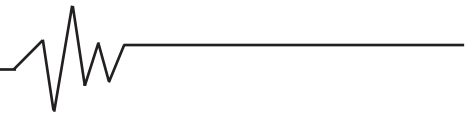
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NEW! Discounted Practice Supplies

As a MAG Mutual member, you can buy the same supplies you are currently using and **enjoy a typical overall savings of 12-15 percent!** Save your practice money through the MAG Mutual and ILS National, LLC group purchasing program on the following medical practice supplies:

- Medical supplies
- Laboratory supplies
- Office supplies
- Pharmacy supplies

For a free, confidential, no-obligation analysis of your current purchases and comparison with our pricing, call 888-249-7880 for your MAG Mutual/ILS program representative.



(Risk Management Tips, continued from page 1)

with all medications listed, be used to prevent having to flip through progress notes to determine what medications the patient is taking. Flow sheets should be updated at each patient visit.

You can find a sample medication record and a lot more risk management information in your *MAG Mutual Risk Management Handbook for the Medical Office Practice*, which you can access online at magmutual.com. Just click on *Policyholders: your online risk management* on the left-hand side of your screen; then click on *Risk Management Handbooks*.

For more information on this or any other risk management issue, please call MAG Mutual at 800-282-4882. ●

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physicians across the Southeast place in their physician-owned company.

If you have any questions or would like more information, please call Tom Harkins or George Russell at 800-282-4882. ●

Did you know?

MAG Mutual Healthcare Solutions, Inc. is offering a new billing service and coding consulting package that is designed to help your practice gain efficiencies, **reduce expenses and collect the appropriate payment for the care that is provided**. Our billing and coding consulting services will:

- **Verify that payor reimbursements match your contract rate**
- Follow-up on collections, including past-due amounts from payors
- Assist you and your staff with coding and documentation
- Provide a FREE initial analysis
- Use HIPAA-ready software

We're so certain that our new package will help your practice and your patients, we're offering a **special premium credit** to participating physicians covered by MAG Mutual Insurance Company's medical professional liability insurance: **you will receive a five percent credit per participating physician—up to \$1000 each—on your annual premium*** when you purchase our **all-in-one, cost-saving billing and coding package**.

Please call David Miller at **800-783-2080** for more information.

*A maximum \$25,000 in premium credits can be applied per practice.

MAG Launches *Operation:Tort Reform*

During its annual legislative seminar, the Medical Association of Georgia (MAG) launched its 2004 legislative initiative, *Operation: Tort Reform*. The MAG legislative team is gearing up a grassroots campaign activating an army of physician leaders into statewide political mobilization.

MAG physicians throughout the state are being recruited, trained and paired with a state senator or house member to advocate on behalf of patients and the medical profession. Additionally, MAG members will soon receive an order form for patient materials concerning the medical liability crisis in Georgia. These materials can be displayed in waiting rooms or given directly to patients.

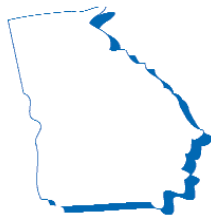
For more information, please call MAG's Communications Director, Kathy Browning, at 404-881-5066. ●

MAG Mutual Insurance Company rated A- Excellent by A.M. Best

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Because your patients come first.
the **MAGnet**™

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